

POONCH AND JAMMU

235

man who has retired from active work, his charge for grinding 000
being a percentage of the flour.

Here again in this country are to be seen the fair complexions, 142
the blue and the hazel eyes, the brown or gold-tinted hair. The
men are in the main handsome, they are not as hard-looking as
those of Gilgit; among the youths especially there is a blending
with the rather effeminate young men of the Valley, but they
are essentially men, their stride is long. They are taller than the
others of the State, though not powerfully built, and it is sel-
dom that one sees a fat Poonchi Muslim. Generally their
faces are long, the complexion light brown, the nose large,
aquiline and well shaped; quite frequently the black hair is
wavy. In all they are a good-looking race, and this applies to
both men and women, who even in their old age retain their
good looks, the men then growing beards, and the eyebrows
seeming to extend forward. What is more noticeable is that un- 515
like the peasants and farmers of the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh,
they are not filthy dirty; you can with safety get close to them
and enter their houses.

Those who have known the man of Poonch as a soldier or 181
as a servant—and large numbers migrated to India to work
as such under British officers and residents—will agree that
their foremost quality is reliability and faithfulness; as servants,
if they like you, they will remain all their lives, if not, they
will leave you at once, for theirs is a distinct line drawn between
those they like and dislike. The women are not as bold as the 562
women of the Valley; they also go unveiled; their beauty is of a 609
different quality from those sisters over the mountains, who
have a Jewish appearance. Although mostly Muslim, they do
not scamper off round the corner of the house like the women
of Baltistan when they see a stranger about, neither do they
stand and stare at him as do those of Ladakh; they just continue
with their work as though unaware of his presence, while the
children run out to look at him, standing at a distance. Unlike 609
the men of Gilgit who scowl, the man of Poonch will usually
greet one with a friendly grin if not a smile.

From the smooth surface of the hard giant boulders in the 133
Poonch Valley, it is believed that at one time a glacier moved 312
where the river now runs, yet strangely enough on the right of